



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

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Hotline **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)**

What is the purpose of the Montgomery County Office of Inspector General fraud, waste, and abuse hotline?

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) established an independent Fraud Hotline as part of the County's commitment to prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse in government operations. Implementation of a hotline is consistent with a trend among government agencies to establish fraud-referral systems as a deterrent and to send a positive message to all employees, suppliers, and taxpayers about leadership's commitment to protect public resources.

What do you mean by fraud, waste, and abuse?

Fraud

A dishonest and intentional course of action that results in obtaining money, property, or an advantage to which the individual committing the action would not normally be entitled.

Waste

The needless, careless, or extravagant expenditure of County funds, incurring of unnecessary expenses, or misuse of County resources or property.

Abuse

The intentionally wrongful or improper use of County resources that can include the excessive or improper use of one's position, in a manner contrary to its rightful or legally intended use.

How can I report fraud, waste, and abuse to the hotline?

The Montgomery County Office of Inspector General Fraud Hotline began operating Thursday, December 14, 2006. The hotline is available on a 24-hour basis, seven days a week and has the capacity to receive complaints in more than 150 languages. Information can be provided to the Fraud Hotline by any of the following methods:

Toll free phone number: (800) 971-6059

Web-based access: www.tnwinc.com/webreport

E-mail address: reportline@tnwinc.com

Why should I report fraud, waste, or abuse to the hotline?

Working together, we will ensure that we continue to have a positive and productive environment that protects our County's resources and maintains our high standards of integrity and service to our fellow employees and the residents of Montgomery County. If you are aware of any illegal or improper activity, do not ignore it. Report it immediately!

Who operates the hotline?

In response to a bid solicitation, the Office of Inspector General contracted with The Network, an independent company that provides hotline services to more than 1,000 clients. The hotline provides a confidential means to report fraud, waste, and abuse.

Who can file a report?

The hotline is designed to take reports from employees and contractors of Montgomery County.

What can be reported?

The Office of Inspector General is interested in receiving tips related to activities such as:

- Contract or procurement fraud
- Significant waste of County funds
- Theft of County funds or property
- Kickbacks/bribery
- Workers' compensation fraud
- Fraudulent travel or other reimbursement claims
- Abuse of authority
- Whistleblower reprisal

What should not be reported?

- Day-to-day management issues
- EEO complaints
- Issues normally handled by the grievance process
- Employee benefits and compensation questions or concerns
- Issues that are the responsibility of other government agencies

What can I expect when I contact the hotline?

When you call, you can expect a professional, courteous, and thorough interview by a hotline operator from The Network, our independent hotline contractor. You will be asked to provide information that will help the operator document the facts of the incident. Try to remember as many details as you can when communicating your concern to the hotline operator or through the web-based reporting mechanism.

What information should I provide when filing a report?

When reporting matters to the hotline, if possible, be prepared to provide the following:

- The person(s) involved and title(s)
- When the incident occurred
- Where
- How
- How long
- How often
- How the caller knows
- Is there documentation
- Others who have knowledge
- Any steps already taken

Can I remain anonymous?

You may remain anonymous, or you may identify yourself.

If I identify myself will anyone find out that I reported the fraud?

If you identify yourself to a hotline operator, your identity will only be provided to the Office of Inspector General. However, if an investigation results in criminal prosecution, it is possible our records may be subpoenaed by the court.

What happens after I file a report (How are hotline referrals processed and resolved)?

The Office of Inspector General reviews all reports received to determine the best course of action. All credible allegations of fraud, waste, or abuse are investigated.

How long does it take for a complaint to be investigated?

The time to complete an investigation can vary from a couple of weeks to several months depending on the complexity of the issues being investigated.

If I give my name and telephone number, will an Office of Inspector General investigator contact me?

An Office of Inspector General investigator may contact you if additional information is needed regarding your complaint.

Can I check on the status of an investigation?

You will be assigned a report number and you will either be able to call back or access your complaint via the web to see if additional information is needed.